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TO : Department of State

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FROM : Oslo 1008, June 28, 1950

REF : Embassy's A-785, Sept. 29, 1949 and A-26, Jan. 5, 1950.

SUBJECT : NORWEGIAN-SOVIET UNION BORDER TREATY

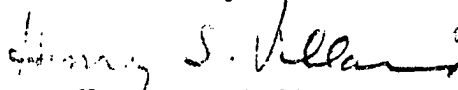
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On June 21 the Storting ratified the border treaty concluded between Norway and the Soviet Union last December. In a conversation with the official of the Foreign Office most closely concerned an Embassy officer was informed that the treaty had been ratified as drawn up, but that one slight change had been made in the Norwegian interpretation. Previously it had been decided that Norwegian citizens resident within 1000 meters of the border would not be permitted to possess cameras and films in order to effectively implement the provision of the treaty against either party taking pictures of the other party's territory. This provision was inserted in the treaty at the insistence of the Russians, according to the Foreign Office official, since they have, to quote his words, "a peculiar theory that one should not photograph his neighbor's house without that neighbor's permission having been granted". Now the Norwegian authorities have decided to permit Norwegian citizens resident within 1000 meters of the border to retain cameras and films so long as they do not take pictures of Russian territory. Supposedly the Border Police will enforce this provision.

The Foreign Office official also remarked that a provision had been placed in the treaty for the regulation of waterways in the border area by a separate agreement. He said that he hoped that negotiations would soon get under way for the regulation of the Pasvik River since the Russians have a dam and a power station in the upper regions of the river and that their methods of handling the water supply are so irregular that sometimes the stream is a narrow trickle and other times a flood, which situation works a great hardship on the Norwegian citizens resident along the borders of the Pasvik.

The Foreign Office has offered to furnish the Embassy a copy of the above-mentioned treaty as soon as it is printed.



Henry S. Villard
Counselor of Embassy

Copy to Moscow

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